Inclusion of drugs under price control

2264. PROF. SAURIN BHATTACHARYA: Will the PRIME MINISTE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to include drugs meant for the treatment of heart diseases like Dilliazen, Captopril, etc. under price control and to bring drugs like Nifedipine, which is the most frequently used drug, outside the purview of price control;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) what are the criteria for bringing drugs of insignificant consumption like Norgestrel, Northisterone, Lynestrenal, nandrolone, etc., under price control?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI CHINTA MOHAN): (a) to (c) The entire Drug Policy-with Drugs (Prices Control) Order 1987 is still under review of the Government and as such, it would be pre-mature to disclose any details at this stage.

2265. [*Transferred to the 20th March, 1992*].

Life Saving Drug for Thalassaemia Treatment

2266. SHRI N. E. BALARAM: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the prices of life saving drug DESFERAL for Thalassaemia treatment has been increased abnormally recently and the treatment has become unaffordable for the persons suffering from this disease;

(b) if so, the details of the increase in the prices of this medicine during the last one year and reasons therefor;

(c) whether a delegation of National Thalassaemia Welfare Society had met the Minister to represent their problems; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI CHINTA MOHAN): ,a) and (b) 'Desferal' is a formulation imported in finished form and is outside price control. M|s. Hindustan Ciba-Geigy were marketing this injection at a price lower than the import cost till August, 1991, thereby incurring loss on the sale of this formulation. The subsequent increase in price was effected by the company on account of exchange rate adjustment and to cut losses on the sale of this formulation. However, keeping in view the overall interest of Thalassaemia patients in the country, Government intervened and prevailed upon the company to reduce the price from Rs. 410|- to Rs. 290|- for a pack of 5 vials of 'Desferal' injection w.e.f. 1st week of March, 1992.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Enhancing the Prices of Drugs under GATT Package

2267. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that drug prices have been rising steeply during the last six months;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the GATT package is likely to enhance the prices of drugs by 5 to 10 times more and also to reduce the health cover from 30 per cent of the population to less than 10 per cent; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken to safeguard the interest of common man particularly in view of the U.N. obective of health for all by 2000 A.D.?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI CHINTA MOHAN): (a) In a situation of rising costs of inputs, some amount of price increase is unavoidable.